

De Sublimitate 30. 1: An Overlooked Pointer to a Date?

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In an article written twenty years ago, with characteristic boldness Professor Georg Luck argued that this treatise should after all be attributed to Cassius Longinus and dated to the third century A.D.¹ His conclusions have not been accepted by everyone,² but perhaps a small pointer telling in favor of a later date at least may be derived from c. 30. 1, where the author recommends ἡ τῶν κυρίων καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῶν ὀνομάτων ἐκλογή as an aid to sublimity. The text is cited from the edition of D. A. Russell (repr. Oxford 1970):

Ἐπειδὴ μέντοι ἡ τοῦ λόγου νόησις ἢ τε φράσις τὰ πλείω δι' ἑκατέρου διέπνυκται, ἴθι δὴ, [ἄν] τοῦ φραστικοῦ μέρους εἴ τινα λοιπὰ ἔτι, προσεπιθεασώμεθα. ὅτι μὲν τοίνυν ἡ τῶν κυρίων καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῶν ὀνομάτων ἐκλογή θαυμαστῶς ἄγει καὶ κατακληλεῖ τοὺς ἀκούοντας καὶ ὥς πᾶσι τοῖς ῥήτορσι καὶ συγγραφεῦσι κατ' ἄκρον ἐπιτήδευμα, μέγεθος ἅμα κάλλος εὐπίνειαν βάρος ἰσχὺν κράτος, ἔτι δὲ γάνωσιν τινα, τοῖς λόγοις ὥσπερ ἀγάλασι καλλίστοις δι' αὐτῆς ἐπανθεῖν παρασκευάζουσα, καὶ οἰονεῖ ψυχὴν τινα τοῖς πράγμασι φωνητικὴν ἐντιθεῖσα, μὴ καὶ περιττὸν ἢ πρὸς εἰδότας διεξιέναι. φῶς γὰρ τῷ ὄντι ἴδιον τοῦ νοῦ τὰ καλὰ ὀνόματα.

Since thought and expression are in general closely entwined, we may now go on to consider any areas of the theory of language not yet covered. The choice of impressive (κυρίων) and magnificent words has an amazing effect, bewitching the audience. It is a supreme goal of all orators and

¹ "Die Schrift vom Erhabenen und ihr Verfasser," *Arctos* 5 (1967), 97–113. Cf. on the later dating G. M. A. Grube, "Notes on the ΠΕΡΙ ΥΨΟΥΣ," *American Journal of Philology* 78 (1957), 335–74; idem, *The Greek and Roman Critics* (Toronto 1965), pp. 340–42. A statement of the orthodox position about the date (first century A.D.) is made by John M. Crossett and James A. Arieti, *The Dating of Longinus, Studia Classica III*, University Park, Pennsylvania (undated).

² Giuseppe Martano, "Il 'Saggio sul Sublime'," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II. 32. 1 (1984), rejects Luck's thesis on p. 367, note 4, but concludes on p. 370: "Secondo noi, la controversia [i.e. over the date of the work] rimane *sub iudice*, e vi rimarrà fino a quando nuovi elementi di prova (per ora di assai ipotetica reperibilità) non interverranno a risolvere il problema." It is just such an 'elemento di prova' that this essay hopes to furnish.

historians. It produces grandeur, beauty, patina, weight, strength, force, and over all these a brilliance that sheds a bloom on words as if they were the fairest sculptures. It puts a speaking soul into things. But this is something where my readers need no reminder. Beautiful words are indeed thought's own illumination.

Ὁνομάτων ἐκλογή, the Latin *delectus verborum*, is an important task for the stylist, and there were at least three kinds of style. Evidently here the grand style is being recommended, and κύρια and μεγαλοπρεπῆ are approximate synonyms for "impressive" or "magnificent."³ Although sublimity is an effect and not a style, the author of the treatise does not always keep that distinction well in mind. He is inclined to sympathize with the doctrine prevailing among later Latin rhetoricians, and influential throughout the Middle Ages, in Renaissance criticism and even beyond, that grandeur demanded grand vocabulary. This confusion, which denies some of his own better insights, explains why he returns to the topic at the end with an attack on "low" words in c. 43, forgetting that what matters is the result and not the means, as Shakespeare's mastery of the monosyllable proves. All this has been amply documented elsewhere. Here it is enough to note that neither the Virgil who employed *communia verba* in the *Aeneid*, nor the Horace who employed *unpoetische Wörter* in his odes nor Quintilian nor Macrobius—nor eventually Dante—shared this view.⁴

If he is ready to challenge these authorities, and to show that this would result in a poetry superior to that of Virgil, Horace, Dante and Shakespeare, of course "Longinus" is entitled to ask for "impressive and magnificent words" (what Russell calls "Noble Diction") as his fourth source of sublimity, and the concomitant avoidance of the vulgar; but what he is not entitled to do is change the meaning without notice of a technical term of rhetoric, where since the time of Aristotle ὀνόματα κύρια had meant precisely the opposite of "impressive words." Ὀνόματα κύρια are not unusual words employed for an effect of special beauty and force after careful choice, as "Longinus" μεγαλοπρεπῆ might suggest. They are the normal, everyday words of ordinary vocabulary. This is why they enhance clarity (*Rhetoric* 1404b5–8):

τῶν δ' ὀνομάτων καὶ ῥημάτων σαφῆ μὲν ποιεῖ τὰ κύρια, μὴ
ταπεινὴν δὲ ἀλλὰ κεκοσμημένην τὰλλα ὀνόματα ὅσα εἴρηται
ἐν τοῖς περὶ ποιητικῆς.

³ It does not seem possible to translate κυρίων as referring merely to the "right" words ("Auswahl" der passenden Wörter," Luck, 110). Κύρια ὀνόματα are the right words because they are commonplace, as Aristotle's ταπεινὴ λέξις (*Poet.* 1458a 18–20, quoted below) makes absolutely clear, and that is the opposite of what is being said by "Longinus". He is concerned with καλὰ ὀνόματα.

⁴ See my *The Classical Epic Tradition* (Madison, Wisconsin 1986), pp. 244 ff.

Among nouns and verbs, *those that are normal produce clarity, while the other words described in my Poetics produce an elevated and adorned style.*⁵

The allusion to the *Poetics* is to the doctrine there of the "gloss," the rare or archaic word that can transform a line (*Poetics* 1458a18–23):

Λέξεως δὲ ἀρετὴ σαφὴ καὶ μὴ ταπεινὴν εἶναι. σαφεστάτη μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ἢ ἐκ τῶν κυρίων ὀνομάτων. ἀλλὰ ταπεινὴ· παράδειγμα δὲ ἡ Κλεοφῶντος ποίησις καὶ ἡ Σθενέλου. σεμνὴ δὲ καὶ ἐξαλλάττουσα τὸ ἰδιωτικὸν ἢ τοῖς ξενικοῖς κεχρημένη· ξενικὸν δὲ λέγω γλῶτταν καὶ μεταφορὰν καὶ ἐπέκτασιν καὶ πᾶν τὸ παρὰ τὸ κύριον.

The virtue of diction is to be clear without being flat. The greatest clarity is got by using *words in their normal meanings, but such diction is flat*. Examples are the poetry of Cleophon and Sthenelus. Diction that is impressive and alters the ordinary style makes use of estranged vocabulary. By "estranged" I mean the gloss, the metaphor, lengthening and everything that departs from the ordinary.

Aristotle's κύρια ὀνόματα are therefore exactly the reverse of the impressive diction secured by "glosses," and therefore exactly the reverse of what "Longinus" means by his use of κύρια ὀνόματα. It shows a certain boldness to quarrel in this way with the master, and an even greater boldness to stand his terminology on its head without explanation or apology.

The best commentaries are provided by poets and interaction with poets. The treatise had last been edited by Franciscus Portus in 1570, and was first translated into Italian in 1575 by Giovanni di Niccolò da Falgano. There is evidence of some influence by it on practical criticism in Lorenzo Giacomini's *Oratione in lode di Torquato Tasso*, recited to the Accademia degli Alterati on March 20, 1595 and published in 1596, where we hear of Tasso's excellence

ne la elezzione de le parole graui dolci aspre sonore splendide signo-reggianti, e nel altezza e nel abondanza degli ornamenti . . . con sollecito studio procacciò a suoi poemi altezza efficacia e leggiadria eccellente, ma non somma chiarezza; . . .

in the choice of words that are weighty, charming, harsh, resonant, brilliant, predominant, and in the sublimity and copiousness of his refinements . . . with attentive enthusiasm he secured for his poems sublimity, effect and extraordinary grace, although not utter clarity. . . .⁶

The repeated *altezza* here already alerts us to the doctrine of ὕψος, but, in the same passage, Giacomini may also feel the ambiguity in κύριος to

⁵ My emphasis, of course.

⁶ Quoted by B. Weinberg, *History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago 1961), p. 1059, note 137. Since Weinberg calls Giacomini "an old-fashioned Alexandrian" he evidently overlooks the allusion to "Longinus".

which reference has been made. He speaks of Tasso's "parole graui dolci aspre sonore splendide signoreggianti." Weinberg follows a beaten track in translating the climaxing last word as "overpowering": but it would be possible to set up a series of antitheses: *graui / dolci: aspre / sonore: splendide / signoreggianti*. In this case, *splendide* would refer to what Aristotle would have called "glosses,"⁷ and *signoreggianti* (*signore* = κύριος; cf. Horace's *dominantia*, below) to the opposite of this, "words in their prevailing or normal connotations." Tasso certainly was in trouble with some critics for using the latter,⁸ though whether Giacomini wholly understood the scope of his own argument is uncertain.

"Magnificent (overpowering) words" / "words in their normal connotations"—what does ὀνόματα κύρια mean? It is clear what its Latin equivalent meant for Horace in a well-known passage of the *Ars Poetica* (234–39):

Non ego inornata et dominantia nomina solum
Verbaque, Pisones, Satyrorum scriptor amabo;
Nec sic enitar tragico differre colori,
Ut nihil intersit Davusne loquatur et auidax
Pythias emuncto lucrata Simone talentum,
An custos famulusque dei Silenus alumni.

When I write satyr plays, Pisones, I will not confine myself to plain and ordinary words, or make such efforts to avoid the tragic manner that there is no difference between the language of Davus the slave and pert Pythias when she has conned Simo out of a fortune; or on the other side that of Silenus, even though he is the warden and servant of a growing god.

Horace uses *dominantia* in the sense of Aristotle's τὰ κύρια (κύριος = *dominus*). *In-ornata* coupled with it makes it quite clear that the poet understands by *dominantia* words used in their "predominant," "prevailing" and hence "ordinary" meanings. *Ornatus* (κόσμος, κατασκευή) is exactly the reverse of this. Giacomini's eulogy of Tasso referred to the *altezza e . . . abbondanza degli ornamenti* and, in a striking passage attesting the longevity of these terms, E. R. Curtius⁹ quotes Dante, who in the *Convivio* (II. 12. 24) remarked that "è la bellezza nell'ornamento delle parole," and in the *Inferno* (2. 67) praised Virgil's "parola ornata." Curtius goes on to cite a French textbook of 1787 (two years therefore before the Revolution) stating that "le style de l'orateur et celui du poète a besoin d'être orné." In his remarks on the passage of Horace quoted, C. O. Brink¹⁰ notes an isolated

⁷ *Lumina* in Latin rhetorical vocabulary: *verborum et sententiarum illa lumina quae vocant Graeci σχήματα*, Cicero, *Brutus* 79. 275. Cicero's praise of Lucretius (*multis luminibus ingeni* [= σχήματα διανοίας], *ad Q. fr.* II. 10. 3 [Watt, OCT p. 69]) should be compared with "Longinus" φῶς . . . τοῦ νοῦ quoted above.

⁸ E. g. with L. Salviati (Weinberg, p. 1018): cf. C. P. Brand, *Torquato Tasso* (Cambridge 1965), pp. 121 ff.

⁹ *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern 1948), p. 78.

¹⁰ *Horace on Poetry: The 'Ars Poetica'* (Cambridge 1971), p. 285.

use of *dominantia* in Horace's sense even as late as the fifth century (the medical writer Caelius Aurelianus).

But ὀνόματα κύρια are for the *de Sublimitate* on a par with μεγαλοπρεπῆ! This completely contradicts both Horace and the normal, Aristotelian meaning of the Greek phrase in rhetoric and grammar.¹¹ Even Diogenes Laertius still has the normal sense (3rd century A.D.), and of course so does Horace's contemporary Dionysius of Halicarnassus, sometimes suggested as the author of the work.

When did this change of meaning take place, and is it widespread? After no example of this expression was found in the genuine Longinus,¹² a search of the following texts for κύριον ὄνομα or its oblique cases in "Longinus" sense was conducted with the help of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*:¹³

- (a) From corrected texts: Alexander rhetor; *Anonyma in Aristotelis artem rhetoricam commentaria*; Anonymi rhetores; Apsines rhetor; Aelius Aristides rhetor; Hermogenes rhetor; Libanius rhetor et sophista; Polybius rhetor; Sopater rhetor; *Syriani, Sopatri et Marcellini scholia ad Hermogenis Status*; Themistius philosophus et rhetor; Aelius Theon rhetor.
- (b) From uncorrected texts: Adrianus rhetor; Alexander rhetor Ephesius; Aphareus rhetor; Aristobulus Iudaeus philosophus; Demetrius rhetor; Diodorus rhetor; Lesbonax rhetor; Philiscus rhetor; Polyaenus rhetor; Timolaus rhetor.

Of these texts, only the *Anonyma in Aristotelis artem rhetoricam commentaria*; Hermogenes; Sopater; and *Syriani, Sopatri et Marcellini scholia ad Hermogenis Status* offered evidence of κύριον ὄνομα or its cases:

1. *Anonyma in Aristotelis artem rhetoricam commentaria* (date unknown). The numerical references are to the pages and lines of H. Rabe's edition of *Anonymi et Stephani in artem rhetoricam commentaria* (Berlin 1896):

(a) κύρια ὀνόματα λέγει τὰς κυριολεξίας. (163. 34)

By κύρια ὀνόματα he means words used in their ordinary senses.

(b) κύρια ὀνόματα λέγει τὰ κατὰ κυριολεξίαν λαμβανόμενα· ἐκ παραλλήλου δὲ ἔλαβε τὸ κύριον καὶ τὸ οἰκείον ὡς ταῦτά ὄντα. (166. 19 ff.)

¹¹ See the entry in *LSJ*⁹ s. v. II. 5.

¹² Λογγίνου Τέχνη Ῥητορική, in *Rhetores Graeci*, ed. L. Spengel (Leipzig 1853), I. pp. 299–320.

¹³ Grateful thanks are due to Professor Theodore Brunner and his staff at Irvine for so readily answering my query. Professor Brunner estimated from a preliminary survey that κύριος might occur about 57,000 times in the entire *TLG* data bank. It was therefore necessary to make a perhaps arbitrary selection in a preliminary study.

He means by κύρια ὀνόματα words used in their ordinary senses. He takes ordinary and appropriate in the same sense.

(c) σημείον δὲ τοῦ δεῖν ἐν τοῖς πεζοῖς λόγοις κυρίοις ὀνόμασι χρᾶσθαι, διότι πάντες οἱ παλαιοὶ ῥήτορες τούτοις χρῶνται· πάντες γὰρ διαλέγονται ἥτοι ἀλλήλοις συνομιλοῦσιν ἐν μεταφορικοῖς ὀνόμασι καὶ οὐ κυρίοις. (166. 24 ff.)

A proof that it is necessary to use κύρια ὀνόματα in prose is their use by all the old orators. <Nowadays> everyone converses or speaks with his neighbor in metaphorical rather than ordinary language.¹⁴

(d) δεύτερος δὲ τρόπος ποιῶν σαφήνειαν τὸ τοῖς ἰδίοις καὶ κυρίοις ὀνόμασιν ἕκαστον ὀνομάζειν καὶ μὴ τοῖς περιέχουσιν ἥτοι τοῖς καθ' ὅλου, ὅσον τὸν Σωκράτην. (181. 12 ff.)

A second way to gain clarity is to use appropriate and ordinary names for everything, and not periphrases or universals: for example, "Socrates."

(e) αἱ μὲν οὖν γλῶτται ἥτοι αἱ διάλεκτοι εἰσὶν ἀγνώτες ἡμῖν καὶ ἄγνωστοι, τὰ δὲ κύρια ἴσμεν ὀνόματα. (202. 15)

Glosses or dialectical usages are unknown to us and unfamiliar. Ordinary words we know.

Five examples also occur where ὄνομα κύριον means "proper name."¹⁵

2. Hermogenes (2nd–3rd century A. D.), Περὶ ἰδεῶν λόγοι. Cf. *Hermogenis Opera*, ed. H. Rabe (repr. Stuttgart 1969), 2, p. 5, line 80.

ἕτερον δὲ εἶδος δριμύτητος τὸ ἐκ παρονομασίας, οὐκ ἐξ ὁμοιότητος, ὅταν κυρίῳ τινὶ ὀνόματι ἢ ῥήματι χρησάμενοι εἴτ' εὐθύς ἐπόμενοι τούτῳ χρῆσώμεθα καὶ ἐφ' οὗ μὴ κύριόν ἐστι πράγματος.

A second type of sarcasm involves an unexpected play on words rather than punning. We use a noun or verb in its normal sense, and then immediately go on to apply it to something where it is not normal.

3. Sopater (4th century A.D.). Cf. *Rhetores Graeci*, ed. C. Walz (Stuttgart 1835, repr. 1968). Example (a) is from the *Scholia ad Hermogenis Status seu artem rhetoricam*. Examples (b) and (c) are from the *Διαιρέσεις Ζητημάτων*.

(a) λέγομεν, ὅτι οὐδέποτε δύναται συστήναι ἀνθορισμὸς μὴ προηγησαμένου ὅρου· ὁ πρῶτος τεταγμένος τὸ κύριον ἔσχε τοῦ ὀνόματος, ὁ δὲ ἐναντίος ἐκ τῆς ἐναντιότητος εἴληφε τὸ ὄνομα. (Walz 5. 152. 27).

¹⁴ This seems to be the sense. Cf. *itaque, si antiquum sermonem nostro comparemus, paene iam quidquid loquimur figura est.* . . . Quint. *I. O.* IX. 3. 1.

¹⁵ This usage is attested since Polybius. See below.

Our argument is that a counter-definition must always be preceded by a definition. The first is drawn up to contain the normal use of the name: the counter-definition gets its name from its contrariety.

(b) ἀπὸ τοῦ τολμήματος τούτου ἔχει τὴν κλησιν ἀκόλουθον. ὥστ' εἰ τὸ ὄνομα ἐκ τῆς πράξεως κατ' αὐτῶν κύριον, καὶ ἡ τιμωρία μετὰ τῶν νόμων κατ' αὐτῶν κυρία εἶναι ὀφείλει αἰεὶ. (Walz 8. 254. 22)

He takes his sobriquet from this reckless deed, so that, if a name is validly applied to them that derives from their behavior, their legal punishment also ought always to be valid.

(c) ἡ παραγραφικὴ ἔν μὲν ἔχει τὸ κύριον ὄνομα· συνέζευκται δὲ κατὰ εὐθυδικίαν πάντως ἄλλη τινί, ἢ μιᾷ τῶν λογικῶν, ἢ μιᾷ τῶν νομικῶν. (Walz 8. 267. 31)

A plea of inadmissibility has one normal name, but is of course combined in relation to the direct plea with another depending on either a point of logic or a point of law.

4. *Syriani, Sopatri et Marcellini scholia ad Hermogenis Status* ("post A.D. saec. 7"). This is from Walz 4, page 400, lines 25–27:

ἐροῦμεν οὖν, ὅτι μάλιστα μὲν τῷ κοινῷ ὀνόματι ὡς ἰδίῳ ἐχρήσατο· πολλὰ γὰρ καὶ ἄλλα τῷ τοῦ γένους ὀνόματι ὡς κυρίῳ κέχρηται.

Our explanation will be that he has preferred to use the common name as proper. There are many other cases of his use of the name of the genus as if it were specific.

The meaning of κύριον ὄνομα as "proper name," is already noted in *LSJ*⁹ for Polybius (VI. 46. 10), Apollonius Dyscolus (2 c. A.D.) and Herodian (2 c. A.D.). This is a variant of Aristotle's doctrine that the κύριον ὄνομα of anything is that by which it is normally known. The anonymous commentary on the *Rhetoric* (1. above) shows both usages. All the texts show that κύριον ὄνομα is felt as something ordinary and appropriate because it defines the prevailing usage of a particular word or term. In no case is κύριον something so unusual or impressive that it could be an aid to extraordinary or "sublime" effects. There is thus no parallel at all in the texts scanned to "Longinus" meaning. The nearest approach to that is actually listed by *LSJ*⁹ s.v. κυρίως. The adverb, which for Aristotle means "in the normal sense," is used to mean "in a special or exceptional sense" by Aristotle's commentator Olympiodorus in the 6th century A.D. But even this is not really the same as "in a magnificent sense," μεγαλοπρεπῶς, which would be needed for a complete parallel with *de Sublimitate* 30. 1.

How far "Longinus" is flying in the face of tradition is shown by his own use at 28. 1 of κυριολογία to imply "words in their ordinary sense." This meaning was hallowed by centuries of usage in the schools. Tryphon,

for example, a rhetorician dated by Walz to the time of Augustus, shows total orthodoxy:

τῆς δὲ φράσεως εἶδη εἰσὶ δύο, κυριολογία τε καὶ τρόπος. Κυριολογία μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ἢ διὰ τῆς πρώτης θέσεως τῶν ὀνομάτων σημαίνουσα· οἶον. . . . (Tryphon, *Περὶ τρόπων*, Walz 8. 728. 5 ff.)

There are two categories of expression, literal and figurative. Literal language conveys its message by using the prime significance of words, for example. . . .

The point is then illustrated by Homer, *Iliad*. XXIII. 634–37.¹⁶

The term was used by the anonymous commentary on the *Rhetoric* and other late authors in the form κυριολεξία. Here, the *de Sublimitate* agrees with the rhetorical tradition as it still persisted in late antiquity, even in Eustathius.¹⁷ But two chapters later, as we saw, κύριος parallels μεγαλοπρεπής. Two questions arise:

- a. What triggered in the author's mind an interference so powerful that he reverses the normal meaning—normal even for himself—of the adjective κύριος in the phrase κύρια ὀνόματα? This meaning is still well established both in Hermogenes and in the *Anonyma in Aristotelis artem rhetoricam commentaria* (and for that matter almost to the end of antiquity).
- b. Can this interference, whatever its cause, have occurred as early as the first century A.D.,¹⁸ even in the reign of Augustus, as has been suggested by those who assign the treatise to Dionysius of Halicarnassus?

The answer to the second question is obviously no. How could a professor of rhetoric publish a treatise which, without apology or explanation, stands on its head the ordinary usage of a technical term of his art as evidenced by contemporary rhetoricians both in Greek and Latin? If he had been Dionysius of Halicarnassus, this would be a technical term at that which he had himself applied elsewhere in its usual sense. What would his readers have made of it? Careful and comparative reading of the *De Sublimitate* shows in fact that it heralds quite a different sensibility. In the assessment of this, its anti-Alexandrianism must be noted. Can the critic

¹⁶ The treatise attributed to Gregory of Corinth (late 12th, early 13th century) by Walz (8. pp. 763 ff.), where a similar definition and illustration of κυριολογία occurs, is regarded by K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur* (repr. New York 1970), I. p. 589, as earlier.

¹⁷ κυριολεξία, 624. 41; κυριολεκτέω, 623. 36; 836. 58. See *Eustathii Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem*, ed. M. van der Valk, II (Leiden 1976), "Praefatio," p. XLIII with note 3.

¹⁸ A. Lesky, for example, following (the unnamed) Wilamowitz, is quite sure that "Longinus" answered Caecilius of Caleacte "in A.D. 40" (*History of Greek Literature*, Eng. tr. p. 830).

who damns Apollonius with faint praise and Callimachus by indirection have been the contemporary of Virgil, Crinagoras, or even Quintilian?

The answer to the first question is more complex. In the twelfth century, Eustathius still maintains the distinction between τροπολεκτέω and κυριολεκτέω. A contrary interference so powerful in the case of "Longinus"—the more powerful the earlier he is dated—must be caused by cross-cultural factors. Already Cicero speaks of certain *verba* as *propria*, as *certa quasi vocabula rerum, paene una nata cum rebus ipsis* (*de Or.* III. 37. 149). The element of conventionality, urged in Plato's *Cratylus* by the Parmenidean Hermogenes, is beginning to be attenuated by such a theory.

This feeling was reinforced by those cultures in which the yawning gap between "word" and "reality" was less obvious than to the Greeks. The Hebrew *davar*, for example, means both λόγος and ἔργον, and Κύριος is the normal equivalent of the Divine Name in the Septuagint. "The Word(s) of the Lord" is a concept familiar to Jews and Christians in many senses except that of "ordinary," "everyday," "normal." This is to enter on a vast field,¹⁹ but in fact Jewish influence has often been noted in the treatise, apart from the Genesis quotation (9. 9). For the Hebrew mind, the name or *shem* was as closely related to the named thing as the shadow is to the body that casts it.²⁰

To theorists of this persuasion, the ἐκλογή κυρίων ὀνομάτων could not therefore be a simple matter of rhetorical effect. It was something more primitive, less conventional and arbitrary, since the κύρια ὀνόματα are not so much rhetorical devices as clues to the essence of what is named, conferred at the time of the invention of language. The Stoics had begun to follow this line of thought,²¹ already familiar to Plato; and Philo Judaeus (no rhetorician) provides an extraordinary example of such confusion of Hebrew religious and Greek grammatical idiom. He praises the authors of the Septuagint, for example, for the precision of their work (*de Vita Mosis* II. 38):

καίτοι τίς οὐκ οἶδεν, ὅτι πᾶσα μὲν διάλεκτος, ἡ δ' Ἑλληνικὴ διαφερόντως, ὀνομάτων πλουτεῖ, καὶ ταῦτ' ἐνθύμημα οἷόν τε μεταφράζοντα καὶ παραφράζοντα σχηματίζει πολλὰ ἄλλοτε ἄλλας ἐφαρμόζοντα λέξεις; ὅπερ ἐπὶ ταύτης τῆς νομοθεσίας οὐ φασι συμβῆναι, συνενεχθῆναι δ' εἰς ταῦτ'.

¹⁹ Of which the entry s.v. "dabar" in Botterweck / Ringgren, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, II (Stuttgart 1977), cols. 89–133 (Bergman, Lutzmann, Schmidt), gives some inkling.

²⁰ See G. Kittel, *Lexikon zum Neuen Testament*, V (Stuttgart 1950), pp. 242 ff., esp. pp. 263–64 (H. Bietenhard); Bauer–Arndt–Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago / Cambridge, 8th impression 1964), p. 574, col. 2.

²¹ . . . *tamen audeamus imitari Stoicos, qui studiose exquirunt, unde verba sint ducta*: Cicero, *de Off.* I. 7. 23.

κύρια κυρίοις ὀνόμασι, τὰ Ἑλληνικὰ τοῖς Χαλδαϊκοῖς, ἐναρμοσθέντα εἰς μάλα τοῖς δηλουμένοις πράγμασι.

It is a commonplace that the Greek language is uniquely rich in vocabulary. It is possible to translate and paraphrase the same thought in many forms with the help of varying words. But in the case of this giving of the Law that did not happen. The Greek and Hebrew were precisely correlated, *exact word for exact word*, well adapted to the revelation given.

It might indeed be possible to translate κύρια κυρίοις ὀνόμασι here as "inspired word for inspired word," something that for an Aristotelian would never do.

Philo contrasts this precision with the lubricity of normal Greek, where all kinds of adaptations of a single *enthumema* are possible. In another passage (*Quod det. potiori insid. soleat*, Cohn-Wendland [Berlin 1886], I. 287. 26: cf. II. 95. 8) he speaks of ἐμφαντικωτάτων καὶ κυρίων ὀνομάτων, "most expressive and exact words." This collocation of adjectives, with its graphic ("painterly") nuance, reminds one very much of the *de Sublimitate*. Elsewhere in Philo κύριον ὄνομα means, not the "everyday name" of some object, but the "proper name" of the Lord. *De Mutatione Nominum* 12 may be adduced:

δίδωσι καταχρῆσθαι ὡς ἂν ὀνόματι κυρίῳ τῷ "κύριος ὁ Θεός."

He permits the use, as if it were a proper name, of the phrase "the Lord God."

Philo approves of those [Stoic] contemporaries whom he describes as ζητητικοὶ τῶν κυρίων ὀνομάτων ("seekers after the right names"). But, if the κύριον ὄνομα was the normal nomenclature of an object, why was any search necessary?

It is one thing however to find that a name expresses the essence of a created thing, and another that it is magnificent. But if God sanctioned the names, then obviously they may share (like Moses) in His reflected glory. Philo provides both the evidence of change from the Aristotelian meaning for which we are looking, and the plus that is missing in the Stoic theory. The *de Praemiis et Poenis* marks a culmination in his re-evaluation of κύριος. On section 111 (παγκάλως χρησάμενος τοῖς ὀνόμασι κυρίοις ἅμα καὶ προσφυέσιν: "making excellent use of the right and natural names"), F. H. Colson²² lists some of Philo's varying usages of κύριον ὄνομα²³ and continues (my italics):

Here the use is extended further. "Day" is κύριον because it expresses the lesson which Philo draws more exactly than "years" for instance would, and "number" is κύριον because it brings out a similar lesson more exactly

²² Loeb Classical Library, vol. VIII (London and Cambridge, Mass. 1939), p. 457.

²³ Which may be studied in detail in J. Leisegang's indices in vol. VII of Cohn-Wendland, pp. 582-83.

than "all thy days" would. Thus the phrase [i.e. κύριον ὄνομα] has been made to mean something almost the opposite of what we should call literal

...

Is not this παγκάλως the root of "Longinus'" own wrench (in Formalist terminology, *sdvig*) of ὀνόματα κύρια towards μεγαλοπρεπή in the *de Sublimitate*?

It is evident that with Philo we move into a different world from that of Horace's *inornata et dominantia nomina*, even though the two were, roughly speaking, contemporaries. But, as Colson's note shows, for Philo this reversal of meaning was by no means established. His thought was still shifting and fluid. He was still engaged in arguing a case. He certainly lays the groundwork for the change of meaning found in the *de Sublimitate* but, one suspects, no more than that. He was after all a speculative thinker and philosopher, not a rhetorical technician. He was far too conscious of his Jewish heritage to be so absorbed by the Greek literary achievement.

By the time the *de Sublimitate* was written by one who evidently was a professional student of literature of any kind, and who accords no privileged status to an Old Testament example paralleled with one from the *Iliad*, the traditional meaning of the phrase κύρια ὀνόματα, sanctioned by the authority of Aristotle, hallowed by centuries of rhetorical teaching, and presumed by Philo's polemic against Greek glibness, must have begun, in certain quarters at least, to fade. Now it could mean the word that penetrated to the very heart of the thing named, that gave as it were the Creator's perspective, "putting a speaking soul (ψυχὴ φωνητική) into things." *Bereshith* (2. 7) related that God had breathed into Adam the breath of life, and that he thus became a "living soul," *nepesh hajjāh*; in the Septuagint ψυχὴ ζῶσα. But, in "Longinus", where the sublime artist with words becomes himself a kind of creator, bringing the bloom of life to his sculptures,²⁴ ψυχὴ φωνητική also seems a loaded expression, and the unexpected use of *nepesh* on the Qumran scrolls to mean "throat as the organ of speech" (= "speaking soul") may be dimly at work in the phraseology of the Greek.²⁵ Philo had commended Moses' modesty as an orator, but made God answer him (*De Vita Mosis* I. 84):

²⁴ The imagery is already known to Pindar. Cf. *Nem.* 5. 1 ff., and J. K. Newman / F. S. Newman, *Pindar's Art* (Hildesheim 1984), pp. 114–18.

²⁵ *Nepesh* normally denotes in Hebrew the throat as breathing, or as eating, hungering, desiring, rather than speaking. But "My *nepesh* (= "throat" = ψυχὴ) roars so as to praise Thy name" is quoted from the Qumran finds (11QPsa19. 8) in Botterweck–Ringgren–Fabry, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament* V (1986), col. 553 (H. Seebass). Seebass adds that the verb here is appropriate to a lion (cf. Pindar's ὄρυσσαι, *Ol.* 9. 109, with which *LSJ*⁹ compare LXX Ps. 37 [38]: 9). He also notes expressions from the scrolls such as "With my whole *leb* and my whole *nepesh* I bless / glorify Thee."

ἀρα γε ἄγνοεῖς, εἶπε, τὸν δόντα ἀνθρώπῳ στόμα καὶ κατασκευάσαντα γλῶτταν καὶ ἀρτηρίαν καὶ τὴν ἅπασαν λογικῆς φωνῆς ὀργανοποιῖαν; αὐτός εἰμι ἐγώ.

Do you not know, he said, the One who gave to man a mouth, and who formed the tongue and throat and all the instrumentality of rational discourse? It is I Myself.

The notion of the "speaking soul" seems very close to this.²⁶

A Hellenized Jew in Philo's tradition would understand that a ψυχὴ φωνητική fresh from praising the Name of the Lord Most High (τὸ ὄνομα Κυρίου ὑψίστου) and now imitating His creative act in words could not use in its sublime task Aristotle's kind of ὀνόματα κύρια. Μεγαλοπρεπὴ would alone be appropriate, since the Lord alone is great, and that is what κύρια would now have to mean. The implicit theory of artistic creativity reminds one of Pygmalion, most familiar from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, although even he needed the help of Aphrodite. Orthodox Jewish unease with the idol and even with the golem, which had no φωνή, may be contrasted.²⁷

The author of the *de Sublimitate* was not the genuine Longinus, since in the passage compared by Luck²⁸ with *de Subl.* 30. 1 precisely the characteristic element is missing. For the same reason, he was not a Greek, even though he had received (like St. Paul) an excellent Greek education. He brings different attitudes to literature, as his preoccupation with the ultimately religious term *ekplexis* shows. Yet he does not for all that question the primacy or paradigmatic status of Greek literature. He was not therefore a cultural partisan, like Philo or even Josephus in the first century. He wrote at a time when traditional rhetorical ideas and even terminology were open to radical modification. He was not however a *vox clamantis in deserto*. He expected his readers to "need no reminder" (μὴ καὶ περιττὸν ἢ πρὸς εἰδότας διεξιέναι). The recipient of the treatise was obviously not meant to be puzzled by his redefinition of κύριος. In Greek, the *Umdeutung* may possibly be signalled by the time of Olympiodorus, even though the Aristotelian meaning persisted in the Christian Bishop Eustathius (†1194?); and in the Latin tradition the original sense of Horace's *dominantia verba* is

²⁶ Isocrates had already described language as man's most distinguishing characteristic (*Antidosis* 293–94). We cannot wholly separate the Greek and the non-Greek in ideas, any more than we can do that in vocabulary.

²⁷ Cf. OT Ps. 115:4 and, in the same tradition, εἰδωλα ἄφωνα, NT 1 Ep. Cor. 12:2. The golem, particularly associated with Rabbi Löw in 16th century Prague (his memory still persists at the old Jewish Synagogue there), but known long before him, was also dumb. The clay sparrows in *The Infancy Story of Thomas*, by contrast, "went away chirping" (Edgar Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, Volume I, Eng. tr. R. McL. Wilson [Philadelphia 1963], p. 393), and this of course is the point of an anecdote that appears to baffle exegetes. Contrast the typically religious "amazement" that ensues in the apocryphal Gospel narrative.

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, 110, citing Spengel *Τέχνη Ῥητορική*, p. 304 = p. 558 W.

still preserved in the fifth century. An enquiry opens of wide compass, but for the moment what it all suggests is that we should look for as late a date for the *de Sublimitate* as is compatible with the other evidence, and for its author in one of the schools of rhetoric scattered during the Empire around the lands of the Middle East, though not too far from one land to be unruffled, in spite of Greek sophistication, by *ruakh elohim*.²⁹

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²⁹Cf. ἐκβολή τοῦ δαιμονίου πνεύματος, 33. 5.

